

Appl. No. 09/511,620
Amdt. Dated October 27, 2003
Reply to Office Action of June 27, 2003

Attorney Docket No. 81790.0214
Customer No.: 26021

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed June 27, 2003, has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are made in response thereto.

Claims 41, 42, 45, 46 and 59-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,336,915 to Fujita et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,668,755 to Hidaka. Claims 21, 28, 35, 43, 47 and 55 have been allowed. Claims 44 and 48 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this amendment, claims 41, 44, 45 and 56-61 have been canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claim 42 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of canceled claim 44. Claims 48 and 49 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 42 and allowed claim 43, respectively. Claims 21, 28, 35, 43, 46, 47, and 50-55 remain unchanged. Thus, claims 21, 28, 35, 42, 43 and 46-55 are presently pending in this application for consideration.

Applicant respectfully submits that the invention which is the subject matter of rejected claims 41, 42, 45, 46 and 49-54 is patentable over the references cited by the Examiner. However, in view of the fact that several of the claims contain allowable subject matter and several of the claims have been allowed, Applicant at this time intend to pursue patent protection for those allowable and allowed claims and will consider prosecuting the rejected claims in a continuing application. In the meantime, Applicant looks forward to the issuance of a Notice of Allowance with respect to the pending claims.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance and requests early notice to that effect.

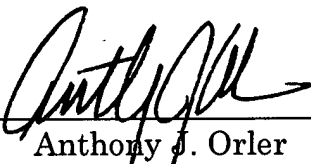
If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Los Angeles, CA. telephone number 213 337-6700 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

Date: October 27, 2003

By: _____


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